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Title: Podcast commemorating Black History Month, LANL history Lab Historian talks with member of first Black family to live in Los Alamos

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Podcast commemorating Black History Month, LANL history Lab Historian talks with member of first Black family to live in Los Alamos

By National Security Research Center staff

The Lab is commemorating Black History Month with events, stories, and this podcast conversation between Lab Historian Madeline Whitacre and Clayborne Carson Jr.

Carson Jr. was a member of what is thought to be the first Black family to live in Los Alamos. He was a young boy when his father, Clayborne Carson Sr., accepted a job with the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) as a security inspector in December 1947. The Carson family moved to Los Alamos shortly thereafter. Later, as a teenager, Carson Jr. worked at the Lab during the summers.

Whitacre, who is a part of the [National Security Research Center](#) – the Lab’s classified library, which also houses unclassified artifacts from LANL history – spoke with Carson Jr. about living here post-World War II.

At that time, the AEC managed the town, which was still fenced following the Lab's secret war-time efforts and not open to the public. AEC regulations prohibited racial segregation; schools were integrated and housing was government owned and assigned based on job and family size.

Today, Carson Jr. works as a historian and founding director of Stanford University’s Martin Luther King Jr. Research and Education Institute. [Listen](#) as he shares memories of Los Alamos and the Lab.

Box:

There are no known records of Black employees at Los Alamos during its first few years. It may be that the first Black families didn't move here until after World War II ended in 1945. Nevertheless, Black employees began playing important roles at the Lab early on. [Read](#) four snapshots of early Black employees from the collections of [the National Security Research Center](#), the Lab’s classified library located in the National Security Sciences Building.

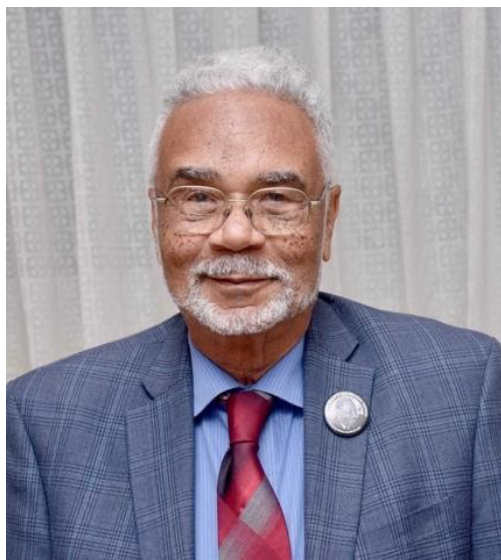


Photo courtesy of Clayborn Carson Jr.